

HOUSE BILL 755  
By Turner (Ham)

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 56, Chapter 7,  
Part 24 and Title 63, Chapter 6, relative to certified surgical  
technologists.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 63, Chapter 6, is amended by adding  
the following new section:

Section \_\_\_\_.

(a) The purpose of this section is to encourage the use of certified  
surgical technologists (CST) who meet the qualifications of this section, as  
“assistants at surgery” by physicians and hospitals to provide quality, cost-  
effective surgical assistant intervention to health care recipients in the state.

(b) As used in this section, the term:

(1) “Surgical technology” means the providing of preoperative,  
intraoperative, and postoperative care, under the direct personal and  
responsible direction and supervision of a licensed physician surgeon, to  
a surgical patient.

(2) A “surgical technologist” is a person who practices surgical  
technology.

(3) A “certified surgical technologist (CST)” is a person who has  
passed the national certifying examination for surgical technologists

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administered by the Liaison Council on Certification for the Surgical Technologist (LCC-ST) and who meets current certification continuing education requirements for a CST.

(c) The Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners shall recognize the profession of Certified Surgical Technologist in order to protect the patient and allow for the use of all qualified health care providers in surgical procedures.

(d) This individual functions under the supervision of the surgeon to ensure the operating room environment is safe, that equipment functions properly, and that the operative procedure is conducted under conditions that maximize patient safety. Duties of the certified surgical technologist may be performed in the operating room, ambulatory surgery centers, central supply, labor and delivery areas, cardiac catheterization laboratories, private physicians' offices, and other areas where invasive procedures are performed.

(e) Certified surgical technologists shall be graduates of post-secondary education programs in surgical technology. This education may be obtained through multiple routes, including universities, community colleges, vocational-technical schools, and hospital-based programs. Institutions should offer a curriculum for certified surgical technologists and shall receive special accreditation from the Accreditation Review Committee on Education in Surgical Technology; this organization provides accreditation services under the auspices of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). Completion of the national curriculum for education of surgical technologists shall result in an individual earning an associate degree.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 56, Chapter 7, Part 24, is amended by adding the following new section:

Section \_\_\_\_ (a) Whenever any contract, plan or policy of insurance issued in this state provides for reimbursement of any service which is within the lawful scope of practice of a certified surgical technologist (CST), the insured or other person entitled to benefits under such contract, plan, or policy shall be entitled to reimbursement for such services. For purposes of this section, the term "certified surgical technologist" means a surgical technologist who has passed the national certifying examination for surgical technologists by the Liaison Council on Certification for the Surgical Technologist (LCC-ST) and meets current certification continuing education requirements for a CST.

(b) Reimbursements shall be made in a timely manner.

(c) The provisions of this section relating to the services of a surgical technologist shall apply to all contracts, plans, or policies issued or renewed on or after July 1, 1997.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 1997, the public welfare requiring it.